



## Increased Patrols Planned for Busy Thanksgiving Week

The DeKalb Police Department and law enforcement throughout Illinois will be working around the clock through Thanksgiving and the remainder of the year to make certain that travelers are buckled up and driving sober.

We are joining the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Illinois State Police and nearly 200 local police and sheriff's departments to remind motorists to *Click It or Ticket* and *Driver Sober or Get Pulled Over*.

Drivers and passengers can expect a ticket from DeKalb Police if they are spotted without a seat belt or with an unbuckled child in their vehicle. Additionally, motorists are being warned that driving after drinking or using drugs or other impairing substances will not be tolerated. Stepped-up patrols including seat belt enforcement zones and roadside safety checks will be seen throughout the City of DeKalb and the state.

The goal is simple: Prevent motor vehicle crashes and resulting injuries. Correct seat-belt use is the most effective way to protect vehicle occupants in a crash. According to IDOT, the statewide seat-belt usage rate is 95.2 percent, yet unbuckled occupants make up a disproportionately large number of fatalities, representing more than 50 percent of people killed in motor vehicle crashes.

"Wearing your seat belt is second nature for most, but we're looking for the few Illinois motorists who skip this lifesaving step," said Commander Steve Lekkas. "During Thanksgiving weekend and throughout the year, motorists on city streets can expect to be ticketed if they are unbelted."

Statistics show that nighttime driving comes with an increased risk for injury or death. Evening hours account for a higher percentage of impaired driving crashes, a higher percentage of fatalities, and a lower percentage of occupants wearing seat belts.

"We need our community to understand: It's up to them to make the smart decision to drive sober – during Thanksgiving, throughout the holiday and every day," said Commander Steve Lekkas "Impaired driving remains a huge problem in Illinois and our country, and if arresting someone is what it takes to stop this deadly crime, so be it. Drive sober to help us put an end to these senseless crashes."

The *Click It or Ticket/Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* enforcement effort is funded with federal highway safety funds administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation.